

Romanticism Literature Essay

Topic Choices

For the Romanticism essay, you will work individually or collaborate with one other person to write the essay. Choose one option from the list provided below:

1. Choose an ideal of Romanticism; craft *a thoughtful and complex claim* that argues the ideal's importance to society or to the individual. You may also examine the way the ideal was important in the historical context of 1800s America and also important in our society today — OR you may discuss the opposite, you might consider how the value is noble but impractical or unrealistic (if you choose this opposite route, you must still prove your knowledge and understanding of Romanticism by proving the opposite)
minimum of 3 literary selections
2. Is the Dark Romantic view still relevant in modern society? In your essay, discuss how the authors establish the Dark Romantic characteristics in the literature of Poe/Hawthorne and provide relevant connections to modern society: What were the authors trying to expose/show/promote, etc.? Where do we see aspects of the characteristics exist today?
Your goal is to make an argument that Poe & Hawthorne are still relevant today.
minimum of 2 literary selections (no partners for this choice)
3. Is our modern world a Rationalist or Romantic world? Can we rely on one over the other or must we have both? Provide examples from modern society to support your claim.
minimum of 3 literary selections
4. Consider how Romantic texts offer social commentary (either deliberately as part of the writer's purpose or incidentally through the shift in beliefs and values from the 19th century to our society today) on some of America's moral, individual or societal failings. Then craft an insightful claim about what these texts exemplify as problems in either American society of the 19th century or the problems that remain the same in our society today. Minimum of 3 literary selections.
This list is just a starting point; feel free to strike out on your own:
 - Religious hypocrisy
 - The role/portrayal of women
 - The role/portrayal of men
 - corruption/greed within humanity/society
 - Science vs. Romantic or Rational vs. Irrational
5. Using a minimum of two works from the Romantic writers and *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty* or another film of your choosing, analyze the role of the Romantic hero in contrast to the rational world. (no partners for this choice)
6. Examine three works of literature that either celebrate/exemplify the Romantic ideal by showing a sublime life inspired by this Romantic ideal **OR** that prove the opposite by showing a life without Romantic ideals **OR** both. You might first look at the sublime life portrayed in Longfellow's "Psalm of Life" or William Cullen Bryant's "Thanatopsis."
7. Other: do you have an original idea? if so, convince me. Minimum of 3 literary works.

→ For each essay question (you are only choosing one), you must use literary selections from the American Romantic writers to establish the characteristics/argument/foundation from the 1800s to prove your claim.

Structure of the essay

You may choose to focus on analyzing a single text in each part of the paper or you may choose to synthesize multiple texts: notice the difference in scholarly approach to writing

- **Analysis Organization** with one text/concept discussed in each section – **C-level paper**

This organization starts with a complex claim rather than a list, but then handles each text individually in the way that the text proves the writer's claim. The writer uses more plot summary to develop the analysis rather than on a synthesis level. The overall effect is models a "formulaic" type essay.

- Intro with complex claim about Romanticism and the way works of literature show the importance or impact of this literary period

EXAMPLE: For Transcendentalist writers of the mid-19th century, the focus on self-reliance as the path to spiritual fulfillment serves as the foundation built on America's ideal of the rugged individual; only through fierce individualism will Americans -- and America -- find our true purpose.

- Section 1 — Text 1 with multiple examples and commentary
- Section 2 — Text 2 with multiple examples and commentary
- Section 3 — Text 3 with multiple examples and commentary

- Conclusion that goes beyond summarizing the body of the essay and empty generalizations. Rather the conclusion ends by demonstrating why these texts merit consideration. However you must show that rationale rather than telling it (Avoid the "As I have proven" tone).

- **Synthesis Organization** with multiple texts discussed/synthesized in each section – **A-level paper**

This organization as well starts with a complex claim, but this more complex tasks ask writers to integrate and synthesize texts within each section of the paper. The sections need to work cohesively to prove that the texts say more when examined collectively than what they say on their own. That is the power of synthesis -- the new interpretation yielded by reading texts side-by-side.

- Intro with complex claim about Romanticism and the way works of literature show the importance or impact of this literary period

EXAMPLE: For Transcendentalist writers of the mid-19th century, the focus on self-reliance as the path to spiritual fulfillment serves as the foundation built on America's ideal of the rugged individual; only through fierce individualism will Americans -- and America -- find our true purpose.

- Section 1 — sub-claim 1 (a more specific aspect of the main claim), with support synthesized from two or more texts that show this aspect

EXAMPLE: In seeking self-reliance, Transcendentalists first seek self-knowledge, looking inward for intuitive understandings of one's self and one's place in the world.

- Section 2 — sub-claim 2 (a more specific aspect of the main claim), with support synthesized from two or more texts that show this aspect

EXAMPLE: Transcendentalists distrust the corrupting and conforming influence of society, forgoing academic and religious doctrine for the understanding of one's own innate soul.

- Section 2 —sub-claim 3 (a more specific aspect of the main claim), with support synthesized from two or more texts that show this aspect

EXAMPLE: In finding self-reliance, Transcendentalists discover the true power of individuality comes in speaking out against corruption, in advocating a more just society.

- Conclusion that goes beyond summarizing the body of the essay and empty generalizations. Rather the conclusion ends by demonstrating why these texts merit consideration. However you must show that rationale rather than telling it (Avoid the "As I have proven" tone).

make sure you integrate your quotes into the paper smoothly and include a lead-in for every quote along with parenthetical citations.

Requirements to follow: *ALL writing will be completed in class, unless otherwise noted*

1. Use Google Docs
2. Work individually or with one other student
3. Individual paper: 5-6 paragraphs (approximately 1000 words)
4. Partner paper: approximately 1300 words
5. Literary analysis guidelines w/ claim,
6. Formal writing rules, 3rd person
7. MLA, typed, 12 pt., Times New Roman
8. 3 quotes with lead-ins & parenthetical documentation
9. Submit essay to turnitin.com
10. Rough draft written in class
11. Typed rough draft for peer editing
12. Final copy with checklist
13. Works cited page

Writing calendar

- 10/22/14 Wednesday:** Assign prompts & essay guidelines, choose topic, begin writing outline/claim/rough draft
- 10/23/14 Thursday:** COMPUTER LAB rough draft writing
- 10/24/14 Friday:** Rough draft: body paragraphs, discuss lead-ins, quotes, commentary
HW: revise & print draft to bring on Monday
- 10/27/14 Monday:** Discuss works cited, write body paragraph 3 & 4
HW: revise & finish incorporating quotes & lead-ins
- 10/28/14 Tuesday:** COMPUTER LAB type works cited & finish writing draft
HW: finish & print draft to bring on Wed.
- 10/29/14 Wednesday:** Peer edit
HW: finish & print final draft & works cited to bring on Thursday
- 10/30/14 Thursday:** Turnitin.com & FINAL PAPER DUE w/ works cited, print before class, turnitin.
HW: turnitin.com deadline by 6:00 pm

We will have computers available for some of the rough draft writing days.

If you have technical problems, handwritten in black ink is always an appropriate backup

Turnitin.com

All work must be original. Plagiarism from the internet, print source, or other student will not be accepted. Students are required to submit essays to www.turnitin.com for credit. Often, students have technical problems with turnitin. You have until 6:00 pm on Thursday to submit (an extension in case you have problems and can then work through them during the school day). After 6:00 pm, you will not receive any credit for your final essay. Class codes and password access to turnitin will be provided to you.

_____ *initial here to accept the turnitin requirements*

Grades

25	peer edit completed rough draft (due Wed 10/29)
100	Final Draft w/ works cited (final grade) DUE Thurs 10/30
